



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
THE PRESIDENCY**

STATEMENT BY

**HER EXCELLENCY DR. NETUMBO NANDI-NDAITWAH
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE
COMMEMORATION OF THE 36TH INDEPENDENCE DAY**

**WINDHOEK, KHOMAS REGION
21 MARCH 2026**

Fellow Namibians,

On 21st March, 36 years ago, our Founding President, Father of the Namibian Nation and Leader of the Namibian Revolution, His Excellency Comrade Dr. Sam Shafiishuna Nujoma, declared Namibia's Independence, and I quote, "In conclusion, I move, in the name of our people, to declare that Namibia is forever free, sovereign, and independent."

On that historical day in 1990, the Namibian Nation, joined by the international community, witnessed the collapse of the apartheid racist South African regime and the triumphant hoisting of the Namibian flag, a banner that must forever fly proudly across our land.

Therefore, today we gather in different parts of our beloved Namibia, the Land of the Brave, as a proud and free people, celebrating the 36th Anniversary of Namibia's Independence.

Thirty-six years ago, our nation emerged from a long struggle into the dawn of liberty. The Namibian flag was raised for the first time, symbolizing our resolute aspirations for self-determination.

Fellow Namibians,

On that historic day, the eyes of the world were fixed upon the Independence Stadium in Windhoek. It was there that our Founding President and Father of the Namibian Nation, His Excellency Dr. Sam Shafiishuna Nujoma, received the instruments of power from the then United Nations Secretary General, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar making a point that the Namibian people and the international community had not recognized the apartheid South African rule over Namibia and marking the end of colonial apartheid rule and the birth of a sovereign Namibia.

Many of us still remember the powerful moment on 21st March 1990 at midnight, when the Namibian flag was raised for the first time, marking our hard-won independence after a protracted struggle.

For others, especially our young people, that moment lives through the stories of parents, teachers, and elders, because many of you were not yet born or were too young to remember our nation's first steps as a free and independent Republic.

In the words of Cde Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, one of the founding members of the SWAPO Party, who said, and I quote, "The struggle will be long and bitter, but I also know that my people will wage that struggle whatever the cost". Those words continue to guide us today and remind us that the freedom we enjoy today has not come easy.

Fellow Namibians,

Our independence was hard-won. Numerous valiant sons and daughters endured incarceration, adversity, and the ultimate sacrifice so that Namibia could attain liberty. Today, we pay homage to those heroes and heroines whose unwavering bravery and selflessness made our independence a reality. Indeed, their blood waters the freedom we cherish today.

There was a time when some wondered whether Namibia would ever see the dawn of freedom. It must also be noted that some of those who fought for that freedom did not live to witness that historic day.

But, because of the courage, determination, and unwavering belief of those who led the struggle, and of the many Namibians who never gave up on the dream of freedom, we stand here today as a proud and independent nation.

This year's commemoration carries a special significance. It is being celebrated simultaneously across all fourteen (14) regions of our country. This is done to enable our people to appreciate and value our independence, own our country, and work in unison for the well-being of all.

Across our towns, villages, and regional capitals, Namibians are gathering at the same time to celebrate this important day together. This reflects the very spirit of our nation, that Independence belongs to every Namibian in every corner of our land.

Fellow Namibians,

This year, we commemorate our Independence under the theme "Beyond 36: For a Prosperous Future". The theme calls us to not only celebrate the achievements of the past 36 years but also to actively shape the future we are building together.

Our freedom has given us the opportunity to shape our own destiny. From today onward, we each shoulder the responsibility to use that freedom to build a Namibia that is prosperous, inclusive, and united for generations to come.

As we celebrate this important milestone, we must also appreciate the peace and stability that Namibia has preserved since its independence. That is the peace we must protect and safeguard at all times. Peace and stability are national achievements. We must protect and strengthen it for future generations.

Fellow Namibians,

At a time when many parts of the world are facing conflict, geopolitical tensions, and uncertainty, Namibia remains a country where dialogue, democracy, and the rule of law guide our national life.

Independence Day reminds us that while we may hold different political views and beliefs, our identity as Namibians must always stand above our differences. On this day, we come together as one people. This day belongs to all Namibians.

Fellow Namibians,

While we celebrate our progress, let us also look ahead with honesty and resolve to overcome the challenges that remain.

Many of our citizens continue to face poverty and inequality. Many families are still seeking meaningful employment, decent housing, and access to basic services that allow them to live with dignity.

As I often say, “We are too few to be poor.” These challenges call for collective action and shared responsibility. Building a prosperous Namibia requires all of us, the government, the private sector, civil society, and citizens, to work together. The most meaningful way we can safeguard our hard-won independence is through deliberate social, economic, and psychological transformation.

At the same time, it would be unfair not to acknowledge the progress our nation has made since Independence.

Over the past decades, Namibia has built strong democratic institutions, expanded infrastructure, and strengthened its human capital.

Our education system continues to advance and transform. Today, Namibia cultivates and graduates its own medical professionals, a prospect unimaginable at the dawn of Independence.

Our young professionals, entrepreneurs, and innovators are contributing to the development of our country.

Fellow Namibians,

As we continue this journey of nation-building, we must also confront one of the greatest threats to our collective progress, which is the evil of corruption.

In my inaugural address, I stated clearly that corruption is not simply a crime against the state. It is a betrayal of the people you are to serve, and could be comparable to treason.

When resources intended to improve the lives of our citizens are diverted for personal gain, it becomes an injustice to every Namibian who depends on them for better schools, healthcare, housing, and opportunities.

Therefore, those entrusted with public responsibility must serve with honesty, discipline, and integrity; if they do otherwise, they must be held accountable.

On the other side, it is saddening to see tribalism, racism, and regionalism increasing, showing their ugly faces in our nation. These elements are very dangerous; they

tear nations apart and destroy countries, and must be avoided at all costs.

I fully agree that we have to appreciate our national character. However, using it for individual or political gain is very dangerous and destructive. As a nation and leaders, we must avoid our emotions to be led by tribalism, regionalism, and all that comes with it.

Fellow Namibians,

When I assumed office on 21 March 2025 under the 8th Administration, we committed to reducing poverty, inequality, and unemployment in our country.

The 8th Administration is determined to advancing national priorities in line with the Sixth National Development Plan (NDP6), with agriculture remaining priority number one.

While not forgetting our elderly, young people, and the youth who continue to be central in our developmental agenda. Subsequently, in the first year of this Administration, the Government has introduced the

National Youth Development Fund and strengthened the internship programmes to empower our young people.

In the education sector, the government has also introduced subsidized tertiary education through free registration and tuition fees, while strengthening vocational training and early childhood development.

In infrastructure development, the expansion of roads, energy facilities, and other key infrastructure that connect communities and support economic growth continues to receive attention.

For the 2026/2027 financial year, the Government continues to pay attention to the social sector, including healthcare, education, and programmes that support the well-being of our citizens across all fourteen regions.

While we face competing national priorities, we remain determined to ensure social support systems continue to protect our most vulnerable and adapt to meet future needs.

Our economy remains resilient, with projected growth of 3.1 percent in 2026 while maintaining macroeconomic stability and low inflation.

However, the global environment is becoming increasingly uncertain, with tensions and conflicts worldwide. Of great concern now is the large-scale war between the USA, Israel, and the Islamic Republic of Iran. These factors could negatively impact our economy. The Government will continue to monitor the situation and develop strategies to take us through the storm if and when it comes.

Fellow Namibians,

Guided by our constitution, Namibia will continue to stand for peace, dialogue, and cooperation among nations. We therefore, appeal to all parties in any conflict to exercise restraint and engage in dialogue for the good of humanity.

Climate Change is another phenomenon that, if unchecked, can reverse our gains and hinder progress at the required pace. It is, therefore, critical that the

international community and individual member states, guided by the principles of common but different responsibilities, play their roles.

There is an urgent need to protect our environment so it can take care of us. In Namibia, we continue to develop programmes for both mitigation and adaptation through the energy mix project and investment in smart agriculture, among others.

Fellow Namibians,

While the government plays its role, true national progress can only be achieved when citizens and the government work together.

Let us move forward together as One Namibia, One Nation, united in purpose, confident in our future, and committed to building a prosperous Namibia for all.

Our future is bright if we continue to walk this journey together as Namibians. Our Independence Day is, therefore, not only a celebration of our past, but also a

**call to recommit ourselves to building a better future,
with One Heart and One Mind.**

I wish you all a Happy 36th Independence Day!

Long Live the Republic of Namibia!

Unity, Liberty, Justice!

I thank you'